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ABSTRACT

If you have access to the Internet, you can obtain information through the U.S. Department of Education (ED) Gopher, a service provided under the auspices of the ED Institutional Communications Network (INet) project, as well as other government gopher servers. At these sites, information can be found on discretionary grants, grants distributed by formula, and contracting opportunities. A variety of online sources of information are described, including: "Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance"; "Federal Register"; ED Grants Announcements; and ED Program Information. Other sources which maintain online grant information are: The National Science Foundation; The National Institutes of Health; The National Institute of Mental Health; and The Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development. A brief description of the information source and the Internet address are provided. A few tips are given on accessing information through the Internet. (MAS)

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Consumer Guide

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Gopher It! Accessing Department of Education Grant Information on the Internet

What's Available

Looking for information on U.S. Department of Education (ED) programs and funding opportunities? If you have access to the Internet, you can obtain information through the ED Gopher, a service provided under the auspices of the ED Institutional Communications Network (INet) project, as well as other government gopher servers. At these sites, you'll find information on discretionary grants, as well as on grants distributed by formula, and on contracting opportunities.

There are a variety of on-line sources of information, including:

- **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance.** The *Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance* (CFDA) is a directory of Federal programs, projects, services, and activities. The CFDA contains a brief description of each program, eligible applicants, the type of assistance provided, the amount of money available, the typical award size, and the name and telephone number of the agency contact for the program.

  The CFDA contains information for the entire federal government, not just the Department of Education. The ED programs are listed in the CFDA numbers that start with "84."

  To access the CFDA from the ED gopher, gopher to **gopher.ed.gov**, then select "U.S. Department of Education Programs — General Information" from the main screen. Select one of the "Search Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance" options, press enter, and then type in the search key words. Scroll through the list of programs found, and press enter to view the program listing. On most systems, you'll have the option of printing or downloading the individual program listings.

  You can search the CFDA by keywords to locate programs of interest. For example, a search on "school lunch" will return information on a number of programs, including the Department of Agriculture's "10.555 National School Lunch Program."

- **Federal Register**. The *Federal Register*, published daily, provides the official announcement for grant competitions. The full-text electronic edition of the *Federal Register* is available only by subscription, but you can view the table of contents for free — just gopher to **gopher.nara.gov**. Many universities subscribe to the full-text electronic edition of the *Federal Register*, so you may want to check to see if it's available at your institution.

  If you're interested in contracting opportunities, you'll need to check the Commerce Business Daily, or "CBD."

- **ED Grants Announcements**. Although the *Federal Register* contains the official application notices for discretionary grants, ED also maintains announcements of upcoming competitions in its gopher site. For access, gopher to **gopher.ed.gov**, then select "Announcements, Bulletins, and Press Releases," followed by "Current Funding Opportunities."

- **ED Program Information**. Several documents describing ED programs are available on-line and can be downloaded, including the *Guide to U.S. Department of Education Programs*, which contains information on all ED programs, and

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A Researcher's Guide to the U.S. Department of Education, which contains only information on discretionary grants of most interest to researchers.

To reach these guides, gopher to **gopher.ed.gov** and select "U.S. Department of Education — General Information."

Other Sources of Information

Numerous other agencies maintain on-line grant information, including, but not limited to:

- The **National Science Foundation** (stis.nsf.gov), which provides on-line award abstracts, publications, and program guidelines.
- The **National Institutes of Health** (gopher.nih.gov), which includes at its site the NIH Guide to Grants and Contracts and full-text program announcements.
- The **National Institute of Mental Health** (gopher.nimh.nih.gov), which provides program announcements and publications, plus other information about the agency.
- The ED-sponsored Regional Educational Laboratories, including the **Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development**, provide information on a wide variety of funding sources.

  To reach the Far West Lab, gopher to the ED gopher at gopher.ed.gov, select Other Education Gophers and VERONICA Searches→ U.S. Department of Education/OERI Sponsored Gophers→ ASKERIC→ Other Educational Resources→ Access the Regional Educational Laboratory Gophers→ Far West Lab (FWL)→ Funding Resources.

A Few Final Words

- Gopher trees change frequently as the Internet grows and expands. Be prepared to follow new paths that are appearing almost daily.
- If you are unable to directly access our gopher.ed.gov address, you can reach it from a main gopher tree by selecting North America→ USA→ General→ U.S. Department of Education.
- The Department of Education does not offer public access gopher clients. You must either have an appropriate Gopher client at your site or be able to telnet to a public access client elsewhere.
- You cannot access the ED public servers by telneting to the site. You will be denied telnet access.
- While every effort is made to ensure that grants information at our gopher site is accurate, please be aware that the *Federal Register* is the official source of information on grants.
- Be sure to check the dates on material you access through the Internet. Some sites leave old information online, or do not update files frequently.

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